

DEC 1953

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY USSR

SUBJECT Soviet Academic Degrees/Kandidat/Aspirant/Doktor

50X1-HUM

DATE DISTR. 7 DEC 53

NO. OF PAGES 2

NO. OF ENCLS.

SUPP. TO
REPORT NO.

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1.

The term "aspirant" does not denote an academic degree in the USSR. It in no way corresponds to the US "bachelor", in fact, there is no degree in the USSR corresponding to the US "bachelor". In general the requirements for the Soviet "kandidat" and "doktor" correspond to those for the US "master" and "doctor" respectively. The major deviation is that the "kandidat" is the first degree in the USSR and it is thus not required that he first hold a degree equivalent to the US "bachelor" as is the case with the US "master".

2.

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"Kandidat" or "Engineer" - The student entering a Soviet university or technical school is approximately one year ahead of his US opposite in academic training. He has already completed the so-called "liberal arts" courses (essentially all the courses given in the freshman year at US universities) and immediately embarks on courses in his chosen major field. The next three or four years of his training are much the same as the last three years training for the US bachelor's degree, the only difference being that he is required to take more

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courses in his major field and political philosophy courses in place of the US liberal arts subjects. He must pass a final exam on each subject as he finishes it. At the end of the three or four years of course work he must take a qualifying exam on subject in his major field. This exam may be either written or oral or both. It is administered by a board of faculty members appointed by the chairman of the student's major department. After passing these exams he may start working on his thesis. The thesis is prepared under the supervision of a professor in the student's major department. It can be either theoretical or experimental, but it must be an original piece of scientific research. When the thesis is completed it is submitted to the chairman of the major department. If it is accepted by the department the student must defend it before a board of faculty members appointed by the chairman of the department concerned. Having completed these requirements he receives the degree of "kandidat" if he has majored in a liberal arts subject, or the degree of "engineer" if his major was in one of the engineering fields. Since the Soviet student is required to take many political courses which detract from time available for studying major subjects, he essentially equals in experience, formal training, knowledge and research achievement the US "master's" degree recipient.

3.

"Aspirant" - The Soviet "aspirant" is not necessarily a student or candidate for any academic degree. As might be guessed from the meaning of the term, he is aspiring to something, namely a teaching profession and possibly a professorship in some university. Before a student is named an "aspirant" he must first have received the "kandidat" degree. "Aspirants" are chosen by the university, i.e. by a board appointed by the rector for this purpose. He is chosen on the basis of his thesis, scholastic average and political views. It is possible for a student to mention to the professor supervising his thesis that he would like to become an "aspirant". The professor then submits the student's name to the board for consideration. Once a student has become an "aspirant" he may elect either to work for the "doktor's" degree or to spend his time reading and attending lectures and seminars. It is important to note that he is not required to work toward a degree or register for any courses. After spending one to three years as an aspirant a person can apply for the position of assistant. "Assistants" correspond to US "instructors". Thus the term "aspirant" is used to describe a condition and not a degree.

"Doktor" - The candidate for the Soviet "doktor's" degree must first have received the "kandidat's" degree. He then spends two to three years working on his "doktor's" thesis. After the thesis is presented and accepted he must take his final exams. The exams are given by a board of faculty members appointed by the chairman of the interested department and approved by the rector of the university. The board usually informs the student that he will be expected to know the contents of five or six books, the literature on several special subjects, and the content of a few courses. These exams are really only a formal requirement. If the student's thesis was good he always passed the exams. After passing the exams he must defend his thesis publicly. As many as two hundred people often attend such defenses and it might last as long as three to four hours. Anyone may ask questions. In general, the average requirements for the "doktor's" degree in USSR are somewhat higher than in the US. There are considerably fewer "doktors" in the USSR than in the US.

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